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PREPARATIONS FOR THE 1997 REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF AGENDA 21

Contribution of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to the special session of the General Assembly in 1997

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

In preparation for the 1997 review and appraisal of Agenda 21, this report comments upon the state of the environment since Rio and documents the implementation by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) of its responsibilities under Agenda 21 and its annexes, the Rio Declaration and the Forest Principles. Furthermore, it proposes necessary changes to the role of UNEP, to enable it to provide better assistance to countries in protecting and improving the human environment and in implementing Agenda 21.

Suggested action by the Governing Council

The Governing Council may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

Taking into account General Assembly resolution 50/113 on the special session for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21,

Having considered the Executive Director's reports on the contribution of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to the special session of the General Assembly in 1997 (UNEP/GC.19/30); the implementation by UNEP of Agenda 21 (UNEP/GC.19/INF.17); ensuring adequate

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and predictable financing of the United Nations Environment Programme: A challenge to Governments (UNEP/GC.19/INF.10); and the Global Environment Outlook (UNEP/GC.19/26),

1. Notes with appreciation the review and appraisal of the implementation by UNEP of Agenda 21, including its annexes, the Rio Declaration and the Forest Principles, as reflected in the documents UNEP/GC.19/INF.17 and UNEP/GC.19/30;

2. Recognizes that the institutional and financial constraints under which UNEP has had to operate and the wide-ranging demands which are made on it by countries for programme delivery are rendering it increasingly difficult for the organization to meet all expectations and needs in an effective manner;

3. Recognizes further that, notwithstanding these difficulties, the organization has made a deliberate and commendable effort in programme development management and delivery, in line with the principles of the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, the Rio conventions and the guidance provided by the Council;

4. Requests the Executive Director formally to submit for the consideration of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development at its fifth session, in April 1997, and of the meeting of its Inter-sessional Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group devoted to preparing for the special session and for the attention of United Nations General Assembly, at its special session in June 1997, the reports on the implementation by UNEP of Agenda 21 the Global Environment Outlook, contained in documents UNEP/GC.19/INF.17 and UNEP/GC.19/26, respectively;

5. Also requests the Executive Director to bring to the attention of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development at its fifth session and its Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group, as well as to the attention of the United Nations General Assembly at its special session in 1997, the results of the Council's consideration of this agenda item entitled: "Contribution of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to the special session of the General Assembly in 1997";

6. Further requests the Executive Director to take the necessary measures to follow up on the decisions of the General Assembly at its special session;

7. Establishes an ad hoc special committee of the Governing Council to assist the Executive Director in developing a comprehensive reform strategy for UNEP, taking into account the decisions of the General Assembly at its special session.

Introduction

1. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) addressed the basis for action, objectives, activities and the means of implementation for sustainable development, in which the economic, social and environmental aspects of human well-being blend in mutual support. The 40 chapters of Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Forest Principles together provide a road map for national action and international co-operation. Governments also signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity, which provide binding international legislative frameworks for action to mitigate climate change, and to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. In that way, the Rio Conference represented an important milestone in the growth of the global environmental movement and its integration into the mainstream of action for sustainable development.

2. The United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution 50/113, decided to convene a special session in June 1997, at the highest level of participation, for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21. The resolution invited organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in close coordination with the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), to assure an effective and coordinated system-wide response to preparing for the special session.

3. The contribution by UNEP to the deliberations of the Special Session has three significant components:

(a) An analysis of the state of the environment since Rio from a regional and global perspective (as contained in the Global Environment Outlook report, contained in document UNEP/GC.19/26);

(b) Evidence of UNEP's implementation of its responsibilities under Agenda 21 and its annexes: the Rio Declaration; and the Forest Principles (as contained in document UNEP/GC.19/INF.17); and

(c) A view of the future role of UNEP which would best assist countries in protecting and improving the human environment and in implementing Agenda 21.

The contribution of UNEP to sustainable development did not start with UNCED. The record of 25 years charts the negotiation of global legal agreements and regional programmes, and demonstrates an expanded environmental awareness reaching beyond Governments into the private sector and civil society at large. The responsibilities of UNEP are not confined to a particular sector or chapter, but cut across the entire Agenda 21. The organization's unique responsibility in the United Nations system is reflected in this submission.

A. State of the environment

4. Any assessment of progress since UNCED must begin with the environment. As the first Global Environment Outlook report concludes: from a global

perspective, the environment has continued to deteriorate over the last decade, and significant environmental problems remain deeply embedded in the socio-economic fabric of nations in all regions (UNEP/GC.19/26).

5. In regions where food security and poverty alleviation are priorities, such as Africa, West Asia and parts of the Asia-Pacific region and Latin America, the primary concern relating to land is its availability, the prevention and control of land degradation, and efficient land and water management. The limited availability of arable land and loss of land to urban expansion are of particular importance to small island States and the West Asia region. Degradation of drylands is an urgent global problem, placing some one billion people in 110 countries at risk, mainly in developing regions. In highly industrialized regions, ameliorating soil contamination and combating acidification are priorities.

6. The decade of the 1980s witnessed a decline of some two per cent in the area of the world's forests and wooded land. While the area under forest cover in developed regions remained fairly unchanged over the decade, natural forest cover in developing regions declined by eight per cent. In Europe, air pollution (including acid rain), pests and diseases, and forest fires were the main causes of forest degradation. Biological diversity is of particular concern in both the Latin American and Caribbean region and the Asia and Pacific region, which together house 80 per cent of the world's ecologically megadiverse countries. As yet no region-based assessment of the state of the world's biological diversity is available, and of a working figure of 13 million species, only 13 per cent have been scientifically described. Worldwide habitat loss and fragmentation, the lack of biological corridors and the decline in biological diversity outside protected areas constitute the primary threats to biological diversity.

7. All regions experience problems related to either groundwater or surface water, or both. Every day, 25,000 people die as a result of poor water quality. Some 1,700 million people, more than one third of the world's population, are without a supply of safe water and, in the absence of an adequate sanitation infrastructure, the problem of pathogenic pollution is severe in many developing countries. An estimated one quarter of the world's population will suffer from chronic water shortages in the beginning of the next century. The development and efficient management of water resources are of particular concern in West Asia, Africa and Asia and the Pacific. In Europe and North America, the protection of water resources from contamination, acidification and eutrophication feature high on the agenda. Water supply to regions hosting megacities is a worldwide concern, mainly with regard to groundwater resources, the intrusion of salt into freshwater supplies and land subsidence. More than 1,500 million people depend on groundwater for their drinking water. Other global priorities are the equitable distribution of water between riparian countries sharing international river basins and the impacts of major dams and diversion projects. By the year 2000, more than 60 per cent of the world's total stream flow will be regulated by dams.

8. About 60 per cent of the global population lives within 100 kilometres of the coastline and more than three billion people rely on coastal and marine habitats for food, building sites, transportation, recreation, and waste disposal. One third of the world's coastal regions are at high risk of

degradation, particularly from land-based activities. European coasts are the worst affected, with some 80 per cent at risk, followed by Asia and the Pacific, with 70 per cent at risk. In Latin America, some 50 percent of the mangrove forests are affected by forestry and aquaculture activities. Oil spills are particular threats in West Asia and the Caribbean, while infrastructure development for the tourism industry is placing severe stress on natural coastal areas around the world, particularly in small island developing States. There is widespread anxiety in Asia and the Pacific, North America, Europe and West Asia regarding the over-exploitation of marine fisheries and the consequent decline in stocks of commercial fish species. Globally, over 60 per cent of marine fisheries are heavily exploited.

9. Air pollution problems are multifaceted and pervasive. Acid rain and transboundary air pollution, once considered a problem only in Europe and parts of North America, are now increasingly apparent in parts of Asia and the Pacific and Latin America. Large regions are at risk from the effects of both climate change and acidification. All major cities in the world suffer urban air quality problems. In Eastern Europe, air quality is considered the most serious environmental problem. Despite coordinated action worldwide, damage to the ozone layer continues faster than expected, with the next ten years predicted to be the most vulnerable. Non-compliance and growth in illegal trade in ozone depleting substances are emerging problems. All regions express concern over global warming but special emphasis is placed by the developing countries on the need for adaptive mechanisms to cope with accompanying climate variability and sea-level change. The rapidly rising demand for energy to fuel economic development will aggravate these problems, particularly in Asia and the Pacific, where a 100 per cent increase in energy use is predicted for the period 1990 - 2010 and in Latin America, with a predicted energy growth of 50 - 77 per cent for the same period. It appears that, for the foreseeable future, fossil fuels will continue to be the primary source of energy.

10. The impacts of current consumption and production patterns and associated waste generation, particularly on personal health and well being, are high on the priority list of both North America and Western Europe, and of concern to the other regions. Subregions with emerging economies, such as those of Eastern Europe, South-East Asia, and parts of Latin America and West Asia, face problems associated with rapid industrialization. Rising levels of pollutants pose serious problems of acidification, urban air quality deterioration and transboundary pollution, all increasing health risks. The accumulation of radioactive waste and the continued impacts of the Chernobyl disaster and the effects of past radioactive spills remain of particular concern in Eastern European countries. These problems are compounded by rapidly increasing urbanization, particularly in coastal zones, and the widening gap between the rich and the poor. More than half of humankind will live in urban areas by the end of the century, a figure that will increase to 60 per cent by 2020, with Europe, Latin and North America having more than 80 per cent of their population living in urban areas.

11. The polar regions, representing the largest remaining natural ecosystems on Earth are also coming under increasing stress, particularly from long-range pollutant transport and deposition. Their crucial role in climate regulation and the vulnerability of their fauna and flora warrant special attention.

12. While this assessment may contain no surprises, the following fundamental global environmental trends demand concerted and more timely attention:

(a) The use of renewable resources, land, forest, freshwater, coastal areas, fisheries and urban air, is beyond their natural regeneration capacity and therefore unsustainable;

(b) Greenhouses gases are still being emitted at levels higher than the stabilization target internationally agreed upon under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

(c) Natural areas, and their attendant biological diversity, are bound to diminish as a result of the expansion of agricultural land and human settlements;

(d) The increasing, pervasive use and spread of chemicals are causing major health risks, environmental contamination and disposal problems;

(e) The continued heavy reliance on hydrocarbons in the energy sector to fuel economic development is unsustainable;

(f) Rapid unplanned urbanization, particularly in coastal areas, is placing severe major stress on adjacent ecosystems; and

(g) A better scientific understanding is needed of the causal relationships between socio-economic driving forces and their environmental impacts; in particular, scientific analysis and subsequent policy recommendations are urgently required to deal with complex interactions among global biological cycles, long-term chemical impacts and climatic changes.

An effective policy response to these trends will require a blend of policy instruments that address the social fabric of life, ensure effective institutional arrangements, improve the economy, and protect the environment.

B. Implementation of Agenda 21

13. Since UNCED, UNEP has continued to promote sound environmental management and sustainable development, through the provision of information, guidance and assistance on environmental assessment, policy and management, and by building consensus on international environmental policy and action. The UNEP Governing Council, with careful deliberation, consolidated and priorized the Environment Programme to enable UNEP to respond to the needs of countries and institutions in implementing Agenda 21. UNEP took steps to ensure that the content, focus and manner of delivery of the Environment Programme were in line with the Rio Principles.

14. Through a process of reflection, consultation and discussion, UNEP defined its mission, recast the focus and content of its programme and revised the modalities of its work with an emphasis on devolution, partnerships, decentralization and the cultivation of new constituencies while strengthening old ones. The integrated programme was refocused around four environmental problems: sustainable management and use of natural resources; sustainable production and consumption; a better environment for

human health and well-being; and globalization and the environment. Not only was it necessary for UNEP to ensure that its work was scientifically and technically sound, but it also had to be developed and delivered to facilitate its partners' action for the environment and for sustainable development.

15. As a result, noteworthy features of the implementation of Agenda 21 by UNEP have been: strengthened and extended partnerships with international and intergovernmental institutions and the development community; a broadening of constituencies beyond non-governmental organizations to include business, industry, women, youth and parliamentarians; a more decentralized and participatory approach to programme development and delivery with accentuated roles for the UNEP regional offices; greater integration in the design and delivery of programmes such as freshwater, marine resources and coastal areas; land, forests and biodiversity; environmental information, assessment and toxic chemicals; a deliberate effort to relate programme policy and design to promote sustainable development, including its economic, social and human aspects, such as poverty, women, population, equity and international economic cooperation participation, a deliberate emphasis on responding to the needs of countries and institutions, achieving and monitoring results, and accountability (UNEP/GC.19/INF.17).

16. Information and database development and networking in various areas of environmental concern have helped UNEP respond more effectively to the needs of countries and institutions and promote the successful experiences of others. UNEP will pursue its efforts in this area further, drawing upon the capabilities of modern information technology, and its own strengthened regional presence. The traditional environmental assessment and monitoring work of UNEP is also becoming more closely integrated with the analysis of trends, impacts and driving forces and, consequently, becoming more policy relevant and action-oriented. UNEP will continue to build bridges and enhance the dialogue between science and policy. UNEP has to sustain and intensify its networking with the scientific and technological communities to remain abreast of their work and to help orientate the direction of research, so that it will contribute effectively to addressing priority problems.

17. UNEP has given priority in capacity-building to providing technical and policy guidance in environmental information, assessment, database development, environmental legislation and institutions. It is essential that more attention is given to the building of capacities for policy development which will help countries integrate environment and development considerations in decision-making.

18. The role of UNEP as a builder of consensus among Governments on environmental policy and action will become increasingly critical as competition over natural resource use and access intensifies, and as transboundary environmental impacts significantly affect the quality of life. Equally important, however, will be the systemwide promotion of compliance and the enforcement of international environmental agreements. The linkage of global and regional environmental objectives with local and national development needs must be systematically factored into projects and programmes aimed at implementing such agreements.

19. In the course of implementing its Agenda 21 responsibilities UNEP has learned some practical lessons, including the following:

(a) Considerably more emphasis needs to be given to identifying and analysing the development of policies, programmes and practices to integrate environment and development in action at the country level and to provide the benefit of such knowledge to other countries and institutions;

(b) The UNEP contribution must be reexamined to ensure that substantive value is added and that the potential role of partners, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations is mobilized;

(c) Preventive and anticipatory approaches, with particular attention to "win-win" avenues, enhanced economic efficiency, social development and better environmental management, must be emphasized;

(d) Relationships with constituencies, including civil society in general and the financial services sector in particular, must continue to be broadened and strengthened;

(e) The institutional and financial means of implementation must be secured in the process of building intergovernmental agreements;

(f) Achievement milestones for specific responsibilities under Agenda 21 should be set and progress towards them monitored regularly;

(g) An integrated, holistic approach to programme development must be pursued. Programme activities need not be developed and implemented in all areas all the time: in some areas it is sufficient to perform a review and information networking function; in others, to monitor progress; and in others still to advocate policy options and mobilize action. Resource allocation needs to become more sensitive to such distinctions to deliver the most effective service to countries with available resources;

(h) Strong emphasis should be placed on issues-specific, action-oriented and policy-connected environmental advocacy, rather than on generic awareness-raising; and

(i) Attention needs to be given to issues concerning the prevention and mitigation of conflicts relating to natural resource use and access and transboundary environmental impacts.

C. The future role of UNEP

20. The promise of Rio, and Stockholm before it, has not been fully realized. The state of the environment has not improved significantly and in many respects has deteriorated. Notwithstanding a remarkable slate of achievements by UNEP in partnership with national Governments, other parts of the United Nations system, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, a significant gap remains between expectations and results.

21. Successes need to be applauded and actions in their infancy need to be nurtured and persistently encouraged. But it is clear that more far-reaching reform is called for in UNEP and more broadly. This session of Governing Council and the upcoming special session of the General Assembly offer a unique opportunity for articulating this need and launching a comprehensive effort to reorient UNEP.

1. Reorienting UNEP

22. In its twenty-fifth year of existence, contributions of UNEP to the establishment and promotion of critical aspects of the international environmental agenda are universally recognized. There is a widely held conviction that the world community needs an organization like UNEP to champion global environmental issues and to act as an independent, objective and authoritative advocate for the environment.

23. At the same time, certain concerned observers are increasingly perceiving UNEP as a weak, unfocused organization. Many view UNEP as an organization that has been marginalized over the years, losing much of its credibility, to a point where its continued existence, in its current form, is being questioned.

24. Since Rio, the organization has attempted to focus and integrate its programme, enhance its capability at the regional level, expand its collaboration with partners, introduce results management and be responsive to the needs of governments and UNEP "clients". But the scope of these changes is constrained by differing perceptions and interpretations of the organization's role and mandate, its governance and a precarious funding situation. The pace of implementation is unacceptably slow.

25. Even the harshest critics are quick to acknowledge, however, that many of the difficulties experienced by UNEP are inherent to the context within which it operates, stemming from factors that lie outside the scope of the organization's immediate management control. They point to the general bureaucratic and political malaise of the United Nations system; to continuing tension between protection of the global commons and national self-interest; to the lack of unambiguous commitment, particularly financial, by Governments; and to a location removed from centres of decision-making and from those whom UNEP is to influence, as important reasons for the organization's chronic weaknesses.

26. For those reasons, many would like to see the establishment of conditions which will allow UNEP to flourish, develop a stronger identity and remain independent, rather than become (as some have proposed) a component of another United Nations agency. Regaining credibility and establishing itself as a world class organization will require, however, deep and far-reaching organizational reform.

2. Strategic orientation towards reform

27. Central to any attempt at reform are questions regarding institutional role and the focus of UNEP activities. A clear view concerning the outline of both can best be derived from an analysis of those changes which have transformed the scope and pursuit of the international environmental agenda.

28. Since the establishment of UNEP in 1972, there has been a significant increase in the number of organizations concerned with global environmental issues. This holds true even within the United Nations system itself, where UNEP was once the only key player. These include the environmental conventions, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and CSD. The establishment of environmental departments and the internalization or expansion of environmental activities by most funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, the major international environmental non-governmental organizations, most Governments, including their development assistance bodies, and many private sector entities are also noteworthy developments. To some extent these are proof of the success of UNEP and the effectiveness of the global environmental movement.

29. Given these changed circumstances, and the concurrent existence of many new influential players, UNEP must focus on a unique niche where its comparative strengths and core programmes would ensure a distinctive added value.

30. The growth of environment-related multilateral organizations can be seen as the nascent emergence of an embryonic system for the governance of global environmental issues. There is a perception of much functional overlap and role confusion in the system as it exists today, and a belief that as a whole, it could clearly benefit from an overall effort at rationalization and consolidation. In this context, some have called for the formation of a global environmental organization, modelled perhaps after the World Trade Organization. This development, too, should figure in the definition of the future role of UNEP.

31. Notwithstanding past achievements, there is a widely held conviction of the pressing need for far-reaching reforms. To continue with "business as usual", building in a focused way upon the acknowledged, successful experiences and making incremental improvements as time goes by will not suffice. Fixation on the received mandate of UNEP and on what UNEP has been doing thus far, limits the organization to mechanical reiterations and "tinkering at the margin". A rigorous review of current activities reveals a number that are no longer on the leading edge or represent sufficient added value given the scarce resources of UNEP. Others are self-perpetuating, continuing long after "catalysis" should have been completed. Furthermore, activities once undertaken by UNEP, such as certain types of coordination, may now be better accomplished by others.

32. There appear to be, accordingly, two basic orientations for approaching the reform of UNEP:

(a) To emphasize the need for system-wide consolidation and scope for the comprehensive mandate of a new global environmental organization;

(b) To redesign, reorient and refocus UNEP in a radical manner, so that it emerges as a world class organization with a relevant purpose and a well defined niche, emphasizing the unique contribution it can make to the evolving system of international environmental cooperation.

33. It is envisaged that a new global environmental organization or world environment authority would have characteristics similar to specialized agencies such as the World Trade Organization or the World Health Organization. A strong and comprehensive organization would not only promote effective international collaboration and joint action, but be capable of developing, monitoring and perhaps even enforcing a currently fragmented regime of international environmental law. Its functions could include: establishing agreed principles and norms for international environmental relations; improving scientific understanding of environmental issues; gathering data and reporting on environmental trends; refining analytical tools; developing environmental indicators to track the success of policies; promoting the exchange of environmental information and data and transfer of technology; and arbitrating environmental policy disputes among countries upon request. Membership in the organization would imply acceptance of its obligations, including assessed financial contributions.

Although the mandate of UNEP, as specified in General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and amplified by Agenda 21 is wide-ranging, a programme which is merely "catalytic and coordinating" has neither the mandate and authority, technical competence and capacity, or resources to perform this comprehensive role. This option may not be realistic at the moment, although it should be kept in mind as a longer term possibility.

34. At this time, the second option appears to be the most reasonable and, although difficult enough in itself, should drive the development of a new blueprint for reform. A blueprint for reorientation must begin with the question of institutional role and programme focus. Of all the possible areas of activity with which UNEP could be involved, three emerge as uniquely relevant. In one way or another, these have always been regarded as the mandate of UNEP, but they should be redefined, restructured, refocused, given new vitality, and pursued with new vigour. They include:

(a) Keeping under review and assessing global and regional environmental conditions and trends, providing early warning advice, and producing periodically the world's most authoritative state of the global environment report;

(b) Analysis and evaluation of environmental conditions and trends, together with their underlying root causes and likely effects, and the development of relevant policy implications and instruments;

(c) Providing a framework for the development, building of consensus and promotion of the implementation of international environmental agreements and norms, and providing an ongoing forum for the exploration and discussion and mobilization of action on newly emerging issues.

35. Further definition of these three roles is required, but there is an overlapping continuity involved in this concept, moving, in logical, interrelated steps, from the synthesis of available science, to deriving policy implications and promoting and supporting international negotiations which would be necessary as a direct result. These three roles are of relevance to all countries, whether developing, developed or with economies in transition.

36. Performing these three roles will require advocacy, the encouragement or mobilization of action by others, the provision of policy and technical advice, the facilitation of building consensus as well as coordination, but words such as "catalytic" should not in themselves define the organization's mandate. They are much too vague and devoid of clear operational meaning. Similarly, in order to move from scientific and technical information to the development of relevant policy instruments, selective pilot testing or demonstration of an approach within a country may be necessary and close collaboration with, and support of, ministers of environment is essential, but that should not lead the organization to develop a country-level presence or country-level programme activities.

37. UNEP cannot and should not fulfil its mandate in isolation. It is essential that UNEP provide environmental policy guidance to inform the sustainable development discussions at CSD. Its relationship with CSD is a complementary one. Similarly, UNEP should provide environmental policy guidance and scientific and technical advice to inform and influence the development orientation and activities of UNDP. Simply put, UNEP should be the principal environmental advisor of the United Nations System. These are but two examples for illustrative purposes. UNEP's role as a partner in GEF is also critical.

38. Transforming the slogan "we the peoples" from words to action requires UNEP to extend its constituencies beyond Governments to civil society. All efforts at collaboration should be pursued, including with non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society at large, provided they will enable UNEP to implement its mandate more effectively.

39. The relationship between UNEP and the conventions requires special mention. Providing continuous and effective support to the environmental conventions should be given high priority in the UNEP agenda. A particularly important opportunity exists for UNEP to provide a facilitating forum for assisting in the coordination and integration of the work of the various secretariats to the environmental conventions. The current system is fragmented and opportunities for synergy are being lost. UNEP does and should continue to focus on the identification of areas appropriate to development and negotiation of legal instruments and their institutional mechanisms and the nurturing of those mechanisms until they can function effectively on their own. The coordination of substantive scientific and technical support, perhaps in a manner modelled after its work with the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel or the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, is a more appropriate focus than the provision, in perpetuity, of administrative support.

3. Implementation of reform

40. Issues relating to the institutional role and programme focus are vital, but their effective reorientation and more vigorous implementation cannot be achieved without a fundamental reform in all other key aspects of the organization. Implementing this mandate effectively would call for a strong knowledge-based organization capable of mobilizing international environmental science and technology, including its related social,

political, economic and legal components. Reform in management organization, administrative practices, staffing policy and the geographical distribution of activities must continue.

41. The UNEP internal organization for programme delivery should reflect the three roles described above. Programme activities should be driven by relevant "client" needs and be oriented to the delivery of clearly defined and consistently excellent products. Key to success will be the development of an effective institutional capability to work through a network of partnerships and mobilize collaborative centres of excellence and individual talent from around the world. The strengthening of the organization's presence in the regions is a prerequisite to effective interaction with this human resource and to the proactive and effective delivery of scientific and technical advice to meet emerging needs. The geographical network, comprising Nairobi headquarters and regional offices, could be reconfigured to match functional programme needs and optimize and strengthen the delivery of programme-related tasks.

42. All four elements of a reform programme - institutional role and programmatic focus, governance, funding, and management practices are interrelated. Successful reform will require a comprehensive effort. It must be deliberate, well-designed, wisely planned, focused, thorough, and complete.

43. Discussions on governance are well advanced and it is envisaged that a decision will be taken at this Governing Council. Similarly, documentation in securing adequate and predictable funding is before the Council for its review, discussion and decision. Management reform to ensure efficient and effective operation of the secretariat is under way and must be intensified in the coming year. Any further major structural change should be guided by confirmation of the organization's role and mandate.

44. An organized effort should be put in place immediately in order to define more fully the issues involved and to secure a strong core of political support for the purpose, direction and scope of the necessary reform.

45. Such an effort should be designed in three essential steps:

(a) Establishing an ad-hoc special committee of the Governing Council to work with the Executive Director in developing the comprehensive reform strategy. The committee should be small and regionally representative. Consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives and Governments should occur at regular intervals;

(b) Installing within the secretariat a special team to support the special committee of the Governing Council and the Executive Director;

(c) Implementing, in the appropriate steps, the reorientation programme, carefully monitoring and adjusting its results. Consideration should be given to the convening of a special session of either the intersessional body or the full Governing Council prior to the next regular session of the Governing Council in order to review progress.